6: Senfft--53 (no date) 1905 Woleaians
116, 134, 136, 137 Woleai

The soil seems to be altogether coralline. There are no mountainous regions, and the vegetation is abundant. In spite of the thin layer of humus, the usual plant products of atolls are found here, chiefly coconut palms, which are strong and healthy, large breadfruit trees, pandanus, bananas, Calophyllum, marshmallow, arrowroot, some sugar cane, taro, Cystosperma edulis, and curcuma. There are few mangroves, and no bamboo or areca.

The fauna consists of pigs, chickens, dogs, cats, rats, and sea and land birds; there are few beetles and butterflies.

6: Senfft--53
116, 131

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai

Lamutrik or Swede Island is also an atoll. Its shape is that of an isosceles triangle. At the corners of the triangle Lamutrik, Puch (not Pugun), and Fleit (not Faleite) Islands are situated. The Lamutrik group also includes the Elato Atoll about five nautical miles to the west, which consists of the islands of Elato, Oletel, Kari (not Karigun), Tauas, and Falipi, as well as the atoll one nautical mile south of Elato, with the two islands of Lamrior and Ulor. The names Namaliauon and Tauas given on chart 772 of theBritish admiralty are not familiar to the natives. Puch and Fleit are the only uninhabited islands. According to the chart of the British admiralty, the geographical position of Elato is 7° 29' 30" North and 146° 19' 0" East. The chart based on a sketch by the explorer Lutke is not correct. The errors may be seen by a comparison with a sketch I made together with the pilot Davenport during my stay on Lamutrik in September 1903. According to this there are several openings in the reef. There are two passages into the lagoon which lead to a safe harbor by Lamutrik Island.

6: Senfft--53
116, 312

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai

There are no natural springs since the islands are so small. On those islands which are inhabited there are wells in which the water is slightly brackish but quite good. The water from the wells on other islands is said to be so bad that it even harmed the pigs which were formerly kept there.

6: Senfft--53 (no date) 1905 Woleaians
116, 136, 137 Lamotrek

The vegetation is the same as on Oleai. In the central section of Lamutrik Island there is an extensive swampland in which there are copious taro and sugar cane plantations. The fauna is also the same, but there are far more sea birds and rats on this atoll, while there are no cats at all. The rats do a great deal of harm to the coconuts. The natives wrap pandanus leaves around the trunks to protect the palms from the rats; the sharp thorns of these leaves prevent the rats from running up the tree.

6: Senfft--53
116, 131

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai

Oleai, which is sometimes--incorrectly--called Wolea or Ulie, is a typical atoll in the shape of a figure eight. The reef has an opening in the southeast. There are 21 islands on the reef, of which the following eight are inhabited: Raur, Paliau, Flalap (mistakenly called Oleai), Mariom, Tagaulap, Seliap, Usagel (which, on chart 772 published by the English admiralty, is called Olemari through a confusion with a village located on this island), and Falalis. The northern tip of Raur is situated at 7° 21' 39" South and 143° 57' 30" East.

6: Senfft--53
116, 132

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai

There are abundant rainfalls during the season when the southern winds are predominant, that is, from June to December. This also explains the fertility of the islands.

6: Senfft--53
116, 133, 504

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai

The harbor in the southeast of the atoll is very good; the passage is large enough to admit even the largest boats. Flalap and Mariom Islands are now connected by a dune on which some plants are already growing. The channels which admit of passage by boats between Flalap and Paliau and between Paliau and Raur are now very narrow.

6: Senfft--53-54
116, 132

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Lamotrek

There have been no typhoons on the island for decades. May to December is a period of calm or of constantly changing winds; for the most part, the winds [54] from the southeast, the south, and the southwest predominate at that time. From December to June there is a strong northeast monsoon. The average rainfall on Lamutrik is approximately 3,000 millimeters per year.

6; Senfft--54
116, 162

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai

The total population of the Oleai Atoll is 661; the number of women is by far the larger.

6: Senfft--54 (no date) 1905 Woleaians
116, 132, 165 Woleai

Oleai had been swept by this same typhoon, but the results were less unfortunate. There I learned, however, that the population had decreased by one-third during the last few years.

6: Senfft--54
116, 152

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The level of intelligence is not very high. The natives are petty and narrow-minded as well as lazy. They lack the fairness and generosity of the people of Yap. It is only natural, then, that they are not held in very high esteem by the Yap natives.

6: Senfft--54
116, 595

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

Polygamy has been gradually replaced by monogamy, not because the ethics of the natives underwent any changes, but because of the decrease in the female population.

6: Senfft--54
116, 302

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The children wear their hair short; the men wear theirs either short, in artistic disarrangement (Kunstlerkopf)--in most cases--they wear it long and roll it up loosely on the back of their head and fasten it with a long, narrow comb. This is made from the wood of a tree called rauwai which does not grow on these islands and is imported from Yap. When they visit Yap they are not allowed to wear this comb. They have hardly any beards. Formerly they tore out the hair on the upper lips and on the chin;...this practice has been discontinued in recent times. Young women wear their hair down to their shoulders; older women wear it longer and turn it under. All of them part their hair in the middle and wear a wreath.

6: Senfft--54
116, 674

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

Physical maltreatment and theft, however, are very rare.

6: Senfft--54
116, 839

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

Their level of morality is low, and cases of perversion are not infrequent with both sexes; they even seduce children.

6: Senfft--54
116, 142

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The hair of the natives is either straight or slightly curly. Few of them have small curls, and I saw no cases of frizzly hair of the negroid type.

6: Senfft--54
116, 162, 731

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Lamotrek

The total population of Lamutrik is almost exactly 200, and the number of men and women is approximately the same. A very old man from Lamutrik told me that the island was uninhabited until about 60 years ago. A typhoon and a strong tidal wave had destroyed almost all the inhabitants as well as the plantations. A few of the survivors went to Oleai to get canoes, and the others used these to emigrate to Yap, Saipan, Truk, and other islands with which they were familiar. Some of them later returned, after the vegetation had been renewed.

6: Senfft--54
116, 515

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

They are a very clean people and bathe every day.

6: Senfft--54
115, 164, 744, 273

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai

The state of health at the time of my stay there was still so bad that I sent the governmental physician to that island for a longer period. Dysentery seems to be one of the chief causes of death, and the prevalence of this disease can probably be explained by the use of sour toddy; this beverage is made from the axis of the inflorescence of coconut trees. It is very intoxicating and usually produces a desire to quarrel; it is also said to have the effect of an aphrodisiac. I was told that its effect is increased by placing the bottles on the beach in the hot sun and then mixing the juice with salt water.

The number of other diseases is also very high. There are many cases of elephantiasis, eye disease, and paralysis. The report of the governmental physician will treat of matters of health in more detail. Two military policemen have been stationed on the island, and they have been ordered to use all possible means to suppress the use of toddy.

6: Senfft--54
116, 304, 177

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

Men and women have different patterns of tattooing. The same method of tattooing is used here as on other islands; only adults are tattooed, and a small hammer together with some soot are the instruments used. In most cases only the arms and legs are tattooed. Those natives who have had the upper part of their body tattooed use the same designs found on Yap and Ululsi (Ugoi) and they go to one of these islands for this process.

6: Senfft--55
116, 261

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

All the natives are very hearty eaters, and they consume as much food at one time as they possibly can. They do not cook every day. One family cooks one day, and friends and relatives come to partake of the food. The following day this family goes in search of food somewhere else...

6: Senfft--55
116, 251, 262

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The flesh diet of the natives consists of pork, chicken, fish, crabs, and sometimes turtles. The chief foods are coconuts and sweet toddy, the juice used for sour toddy before it is fermented; this seems to be a wholesome food because of its high sugar content. Few people eat eggs, and it is said that formerly no one ate them. Breadfruit is also an important food. The natives make breadfruit jam by kneading the fruit and then burying it in grooves which they seal hermetically with stones and leaves. They consume these during the time when the trees do not bear fruit. They also eat bananas, taro, Cystosperma, and sugar cane.

6: Senfft--55
116, 585

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

Marriages are made after the parents have given their consent. There is no special ceremony at weddings; they consist simply of a banquet and a dance.

6: Senfft--55
116, 276

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The only stimulant used is tobacco which, before the natives had much contact with whites, was a great luxury since it had to be imported from the Marianas on canoes, an undertaking which took several months. Today even the children smoke. The cigarettes consist of twisted banana leaves.

6: Senfft--55
116, 484

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

They have regular expeditions to the west as far as Yap, to the north as far as Saipan, and, in former times, they sailed east as far as Truk.

6: Senfft--55
116, 396, 501

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

Their canoes are made of the wood of the species of breadfruit tree which bears seed. The canoes may be as long as 10 meters from bow to stern; the keel curves downwards and the end pieces are forked. On one side of the hull there is an outrigger and a sturdy bar running parallel to it, on the other side there is a broad platform where members of the crew may rest and where the supplies are kept. This platform is provided with a roof as a protection against the rain and the sun. The sail is made of plaited pandanus leaves; it has the shape of a triangle two sides of which are framed. The corner of the sail formed by these two sides is inserted into a groove in the end piece. The fore and aft end pieces are constructed in the same way. All parts of the boat are sewn together with coconut strings and the cracks are calked with fibers and the resinous sap of a plant. They do not groove the planks used for the canoe; for that reason, and because of the fact that there is no cover for the hull of the canoe, it is always necessary to bail water. A sturdy paddle with a broad leaf is used for steering. The canoes used for shorter trips, within the lagoon or for fishing expeditions, are built according to the same pattern.

6: Senfft--55
116, 841

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

During their menstrual period they [MR: women] wear a mat woven of banana fiber, about 40 centimeters wide, which they tie with a string around their hips.

6: Senfft--55
116, 823

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The natives have a thorough knowledge of the stars and configuration and use it to determine the geographical position of other islands; their knowledge of geography thus covers an extensive area.

6: Senfft--55
116, 502, 778

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

Like many European sailors, these native seafarers are superstitious. Thus it was the custom formerly that a talisman for the wind ("Windmann") was taken along for every expedition. This lioss was a figure made of baked coral limestone which represented the upper part of a man's body; four spines from the tail of ray formed the legs, and a coconut leaf was wound around the neck.

6: Senfft--55
116, 291

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

Small children are naked. Young girls wear a short apron made of leaves or grasses which covers the abdomen and the seat and leaves the thighs bare. During their menstrual period they [MR: women] wear a mat woven of banana fiber, about 40 centimeters wide, which they tie with a string around their hips. Although the clothing mats are too stiff to fit the figure properly, the women move so well that the mats are sufficient clothing, whether they are sitting or lying down. The men use the same type of mats, but somewhat narrower. They wear it between their legs and tie it around their hips so that the seat is not covered.

6: Senfft--55
116, 301

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

On the whole, the natives wear few ornaments. The women wear the earrings and [MR: hair] wreaths, as well as bracelets, ankle bracelets and neck ornaments, all made of braided hairs and of the same material as the earrings. Ornaments made of braided hairs are sometimes worn around the hips for festive occasions. The combs are often decorated with the soft skin or the long tail feathers of a sea bird. The most highly valued ornament is a neckband made of red polished shells of the Chama pacifica shell which for the most part is introduced from the east, from Fair or Jorepik. Finally, another ornament of great importance is the pulverized, reddish orange curcuma which they rub on their bodies. This is imported from Yap and Truk.

6: Senfft--55
116, 304

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The ears of both boys and girls are pierced when they are still very young and the lobes of the ears are gradually distended until it can be drawn across the outer ear like a ribbon. They wear a short string of earrings made of the wood of coconut trees, of tortoise shells, or of sea shells. The women often wear several of these. According to our standards, these ornaments are not at all attractive.

6: Senfft--55
116, 764, 826

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

When there is a death in the family the nearest relatives cut off their hair.

6: Senfft--55
116, 591.

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

Most young couples live in the house of the parents.

6: Senfft--56
116, 764

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The dead are buried, after they have been washed thoroughly, in finely woven mats a short time after death. They may be buried at sea, according to the desire of the dying man. In Oleai it is the custom to drink the water in which dead children have been washed and to keep the body in the house for a few days. The natives explain this by saying that they feel great grief at the death of the child and that "they have to part from it and want to retain something that belonged to the child."

6: Senfft--56
116, 342

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The natives do not take great pains with the construction of houses. The foundations consist of two planks at right angles to each other; short, upright planks are placed on these, and two more planks at right angles to each other are placed on these props. On the beams which join the framework there are buttresses which support the roof tree. Between this and the middle layer of planks there are lattices which form the frame of the roof. The roof is pointed; it is covered with coconut fronds. The walls of the house consist of boards. No distinction is made between doors and windows; most of them cannot be closed. Pictures of fish are carved in the upper beams, which are painted with limestone dye. The roof juts out on all sides so that neither sun nor air can penetrate the houses; the interior is therefore dark but seldom cool. On one of the narrow sides the roof juts out further and is supported by props; coconut mats are stretched between these so that another, more airy room is formed. The natives strew small pebbles chipped off coral rocks on the yard around the house. The average dwelling house is about 3 meters high, 2 meters wide, and 5 or 6 meters long.

6: Senfft--56
116, 643, 651

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

In the Oleai atoll, each island has its own chieftain. The head chief of Lamutrik also has jurisdiction over the two neighboring atolls, Elato and Lamrior, and claims possession of the uninhabited islands of Olimarau, Pikela, Pikelot, Toas, and West Faju. The office of the chieftain is passed on, not to the chieftain's son, but to the oldest son of the brother nearest the chieftain in age, or, if there is no brother, to the oldest son of the sister. It is said that the chieftains formerly exercised great authority; today their power is rapidly disappearing. They are nothing more than village mayors and have no means of enforcing their authority other than that of tying the accused to a tree for a short time or of destroying his house or his canoe. A native of Yap is the head chief and has the supreme authority; this is always the man who is the head chief of the district of Gatschbar. He, too, has no actual means of enforcing his authority; but the natives believe that all who do not obey his orders must die. On what basis this power rests is not clear; neither the present head chief nor his aged father were able to give me any information about it. Their authority extends even further than this atoll and includes those Carolinians who live in the Marianas.

The only outer symbol of this dependence is that the subjects of this head chief come to Yap at least once every two years to give proof of their devotion. They bring tributary payments which consist of mats, Chama shells, or necklaces made of these shells. They remain on the island for several months and are received hospitably. When they depart they are given the valuable pulverized curcuma (reng).

6: Senfft--56
116, 535, 527

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The festivities of the natives consist of banquets and dances. The dances are very beautiful; there is a great deal of variation in the patterns and both the composition and the presentation are perfect. Most of the dances are held in cool nights. The motions of the dance are accompanied by singing and by clapping the hands. There are no musical instruments.

6: Senfft--56
116, 163

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

On the whole the natives are very fertile; a woman with five children is not an unusual sight.

6: Senfft--56 (no date) 1905 Woleaians
116, 462 Woleai
Lamotrek

It is the women's task to take care of the children and to perform all the household tasks.

6: Senfft--56
116, 855

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

Children are treated with great kindness and their only punishment consists of an occasional scolding.

6: Senfft--56
116, 586

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

A married couple can separate without much difficulty; this happens frequently in the case of young couples. No special formalities are connected with this.

6: Senfft--56
116, 197

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The sphere of their language lies between the 140th and 150th degree. It includes the islands to the south of Palau, Sonsol, Pul, Morir, and Tobi Islands. The language does not have a pleasing sound. The intonation is rough and the accent is broad, and is therefore somewhat reminiscent of that of the Chinese. According to my observation, all our letters are represented in the language, including the diphthongs a, o, u, as well as ch and the English th.

6: Senfft--56
116, 304

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The custom of circumcision is not known here.

6: Senfft--56
116, 836, 585

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The man does not care whether his bride is a virgin or not. The natives have sexual intercourse as soon as they are physically mature; this occurs at an early age.

6: Senfft--56-57
116, 343

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

There is a cookhouse by the dwelling. This consists of a simple hut, open on two or three sides, without gables.

The canoe sheds are used as assembly halls. Since the canoes are large, these are from 15 to 20 meters long and equally high. The gable is pointed and rests on large buttresses in the center. The roof is made of leaves and is supported by short, strong posts along the sides; it almost touches the ground. The narrow walls are left open. The boards and beams of the houses also are not grooved or nailed together; they are simply lashed with rope. The men often sleep in these sheds, since they are nearer the beach and therefore more airy than the dwellings in the bushes.

The so-called "bloodhouses" are the fourth type of houses. Here the women stay during their menstrual period. These are erected at some distance from the main dwellings; they are still lower and [57] are built with even less care than the others. There is no adjoining room such as may be seen in the regular houses.

6: Senfft--57
116, 226

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

For fishing they use weir baskets, nets, spears, and fishhooks. There is one very practical method which I have not seen anywhere else. It is used to catch a type of fish which has a long mouth almost like a beak and strong teeth; it leaps out of the water with great force and is therefore quite dangerous. To catch this fish, the natives make a kite out of the ribs of coconut leaves. The kite has a rounded shape. Instead of cloth or paper, they wrap a leaf of the breadfruit tree around the framework. They take the kite into the canoe and fly it above the water. One line is attached to the kite which is held by the fisherman; the other is suspended into the water and the bait is attached to it. If the kite remains stationary, the fisherman can leave as much room between the boat and the bait as he likes so that he is safe from danger and only reaches the line on which the fish is caught when the fish has bitten into the bait.

6: Senfft--57
116, 415

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The domestic utensils are the following: 1. A spoon made of the ribs of a turtle (gadip), and a round basket made of plaited coconut leaves (kopass). 2. Chairs (longeburol) are made of a piece of wood about 30 centimeters wide. Seen from the side, this looks like a chaise lounge without legs, a piece of furniture which by European standards is anything but comfortable. This is used only on Lamutrik. 3. A spoon to scoop water (kom'met), in the shape of a trough, with a handle attached to the hollow part. The halves of coconut shells are also used to scoop water. 4. Baking dishes or cooking pots (moi jal) made of a shell the opening of which is enlarged. 5. Baskets (bod'dan or sanaseu) made of split coconut fronds which are plaited. These are a substitute for pockets. Both men and women carry articles of necessity in these. There are also baskets with a handle (chaperau) which are also made of plaited coconut leaves and have the shape of a pouch. 6. Small cups made of pandanus (guot' tal) in which banana leaves for cigarettes are kept.

There are also shallow wooden dishes or plates (tabbi), wooden mortars (faii) and pestles made of tridacna shells, which old people use to squash hard foods; it may also be used to pulverize burnt coral lime from which dye is to be made.

6: Senfft--57
116, 227

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

Besides weir baskets and nets (jateng), as well as the kite (sellegatschoik) mentioned above, the natives use spears for fishing (owai). These are made of coconut wood and have a barb. There are also fishbaskets (ulpam) which are very skilfully made, and fishhooks (go), which are kept in a small wooden box (saup) together with the fishing lines.

6: Senfft--57
116, 285

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

1. A loom (wisul); this is used by the women for weaving clothing mats made of banana fiber. The mats (tor) are 20 to 40 centimeters wide and have borders and fringes at the ends. The mats for work, which they also weave, are coarse and plain (chap). They wind the warp on four pegs (malier) which are stuck into the ground.

6: Senfft--57
116, 412

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

2. An ax (tale). The blade forms an acute angle with the shaft, like that of an adze. Formerly this instrument was cut out of tridacna shells; today it is made of metal. The natives use this tool very skilfully; it serves them as a hammer, a plane, knife, and file. 3. A small sea shell with a sharp edge (Kilgil), used to cut banana shells into stripes to be used for plaiting. 4. A scraper (waigung) placed on a tripod with a toothed point consisting of a shell or coconut shell, used to scrape coconuts and hard fruits. 5. An auger (wurewur) with a wooden drill bow; the point was formerly made of shell or stone and is now made of metal. The tool for rope-making consisting of three pins in the shape of crosses, which is used everywhere on the western and southern islands, is not used here according to my information.

6: Senfft--57
116, 439

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The trade of the natives consists chiefly in exchanging copra for European products such as tobacco, cotton, matches, hardware, etc. On Oleai there are two factories of these articles of trade, on Lamutrik there is one.

6: Senfft--57
116, 854

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

There are cradles for children (uiluil), made of a frame in the shape of a parallelogram; a loose net of coconut strings is drawn across the framework and the children may be placed on the net. This is suspended by four strings which are tied together on top. A young coconut leaf is attached to the cradle to guard the child against misfortune.

6: Senfft--57 (no date) 1905 Woleaians
116, 301 Woleai
Lamotrek

There are no unusual ornaments, except for attractive red neck bands made of Chama shells. The other ornaments are: necklaces (tagach) made of coconut shells; the separate rings of which they are made may be as large as a nickel 20 Pfenning piece. They are polished with coconut oil and have a dull finish. There are neck bands consisting of several rows of small disks, which are attached in such a way that the fastening cannot be seen. Rings (ma'dsch) are made of shells, tortoise shell, or wood. Ear pendants in the form of chains (tagau, dschudschu) are made of the same materials. Other ear ornaments may be made of the red sections of Chama shells (jorepik: the name is derived from the island from which this shell is imported). The combs for men (makai) are decorated either with the skin of a white bird (snoir) or with long feathers (dschat).

6: Senfft--57
116, 202, 321

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

As a horn for signalling they use a (Triton?) shell (tani) and punch a hole in it.

6: Senfft--57 (no date) 1905 Woleaians
116, 411, 524 Woleai
Lamotrek

There are no weapons besides the spear for fishing and the adze. Slings (chaoil) were used formerly, but are no longer found today. There are miniature bows (baok) and arrows (gafisch) which are used as toys and have no other purpose.